233 the season usually coincides with lent, when milk, as an animal food, is prohibited to the Coptic Amhara, anyway. Sometimes a wooden trough ("gända") is made out of a tree trunk, and after the cows have drunk, the sheep are permitted to use it. Milking is done in a very tightly woven reed container ("gerära") "waterproofed" by smoking (then called "qwacha" or "chocho").

233 423 691 Sometimes a large extended family will try to enclose a reserved pasturage for itself, by means of rock markers, within a "bota" that had been general pasturage. This almost invariably leads to litigation, but it is not rare in districts where landholding Amhara families of long residence feel very attached to a particular territory, e.g. in hamlets near Gondar (Awura, Addis Alam vicinity, Liddta) and in the Menz district of Shoa.

231 The cattle of the Amhara is the humped variety (Bos Indicus, or, Zebu), which has apparently replaced the earlier cattle of Ethiopia, the unhumped Bos Primigenius.[61] The hump of the oxen is much prized, and they are bred for it, as well as for strength in plow-pulling, but there is no breeding to obtain good milkers. The predominant attitude is that of agriculturists, not of pastoralists. The hump of the ox is utilized in plowing, to keep the yoke from slipping off; in fact, in lowlands where horses are occasionally used for plowing, an artificial hump of straw, reeds, etc., is made to hold the customary yoke. The hump is also a choice bit for eating, "shänya 251 262 läjegena" -- hump to the brave (warrior), still served to

61. Bettini, T. M.: Die Rindzucht in Italienisch - Ostafrika. Koloniale Volkerkunde, Wien, 1944.

232 springs ("ambo") exist, by taking them to water there("Hora"). This is done also to increase the milk supply of cows. "Rejuvenators" ("gēbāzayāhu) consisting of large pieces of mineral salt are fed to them for this purpose, also. Whenever possible, cows are taken to spots where the light rains have sprouted fresh grass ("chālē"). If the unreliable light rains fail to appear, the cattle is taken to "chāqā-chwi", lit. muddy places, i.e. brooks and river beds that retain some moisture and grass, when meadows are yellow, dry, and even crabgrass is wooden and nearly useless.

● 234 A cow will not let herself be milked, despite the remarkable patience of this cattle, unless a calf stands close or in front of her. But the Amhara find it sufficient, when no calf is available, to prop up a stuffed calfskin in front of the cow. The milking period lasts from 2 - 8 months. While at the climax the cow can be milked several times a day, this is reduced to only once a day toward the end. The calf takes most of the mother's milk during the first month. Then milking is begun gradually, first 1/4 udder, until, at the end of the 3rd month, the entire udder. Italian estimates of the milk production during the entire lactation period vary from 200 to 450 kilos, the average being 300 kilos.[63]

232 A calf weighing 15-25 kilos at birth reaches no more than 80-100 kilos at the end of the year. Both male ("bāre") and female ("lam") cattle reach their full height at seven years, and are almost never slaughtered before then. Despite the slow growth and the small milk supply,

63. Ibid.

231
435 for his family's consumption, guests, and gifts, but not larger flocks, conserving grass for cattle.

Donkeys: The average peasant may have 2, to carry goods to and from the market. A good donkey may bring as much as 12 - 15 MT, but an average donkey no more than 8 MT out of season (when no caravans are about to leave. They are not usually rented, but are lent to friends and kin more freely than mules, without charge.

[234] Butter: This is sold to urban people and at big markets, wrapped in leaves. Milk is sold only by personal arrangement, directly to the house.

235
435 Chicken: These bring as little as ETH$0.50, or even $0.25, depending on season and quality. All meat prices rise sharply at the end of the lenten season. Otherwise the peasant does not bother to sell chickens to towns unless he lives very close.

Eggs: These sell for as little as ETH$0.01 a-piece, sold only since Italian occupation, and only in towns. Otherwise the peasant gives them away, or boils them in the wot.

231
435 Honey: Perhaps less than a quarter of all peasants bother to sell honey. Much depends on whether there are bees in the immediate neighborhood, and whether a town with tedj-byets (mead houses) is nearby. On the average he may put up at least 5 skeps, realize at most 10 kilos of honey from each, and obtain a maximum of ETH$50. --(US$20.) at the market.